

CATS Membership Meeting via Zoom, October 18, 2023, 9:30-11:00 am  
Attendance: 51

Speaker: Avery Hill, Postdoctoral researcher at the Center for Biodiversity and Community Science at the California Academy of Sciences. His talk concerned “zombie trees.”

Recent human activity has greatly impacted the natural world. One of the results is a vegetative mismatch between the climate and where plants are located. Ecosystems, multidimensional and always changing, are changing at a rate greater than vegetation can adapt; one result is “zombie forests,” where species still exist but the habitat is no longer suitable for them. Dr. Hill studies vegetative mismatches found on the western slope of the Sierra Nevada range in California. Using computer modelling with data from the past and present, including data from citizens using iNaturalist, Dr. Hill’s goal is to gain knowledge that will help guide future land management decisions in order to reduce wildfire danger and perhaps inform assisted migration practices (the practice is currently controversial). Dr. Hill hopes that one result of his work will be to people seeing themselves as embedded in their natural surroundings, not separate from them, and thereby cause them to become better stewards of transitioning ecosystems.

#### Business Meeting:

**\*The motion was made, seconded and passed to approve the minutes from the September membership meeting.**

#### **President’s Announcements:** JoAnn Dalley

JoAnn reported that she enjoyed Lesesne State Forest walk with Tom Wild and Phil Stoke's Farm autumn tree walk.

The Shenks Branch tributary restoration has begun. If interested in the details, see the Charlottesville City website. There is also a write-up in the *Daily Progress*.

The PRISM website has a good guide to leaving the leaves.

Trees Virginia posted the Tree Steward manual on their YouTube channel for anyone to use.

The CATS Facebook page is seeing good reach, though most of the activity remains local.

JoAnn reported that the recent tree sale was very successful. We sold 480 trees to 130 customers resulting in income to CATS of approximately \$6,000. She praised all of the volunteers who worked on the sale and commented on what a fun event it is. JoAnn encouraged other members to consider volunteering at the next one.

**Past President's Report:** Robin Hanes

Robin was unable to attend.

**Incoming President's Report:** Gregg Korbon

Gregg informed the membership that the position of incoming president for 2024 remains open. If anyone is interested in filling it, they should contact him directly.

**Projects Committee:** Kathy Nepote

Kathy noted that in October, given the training class and other activities, the projects committee schedules fewer activities than in some other months.

On the schedule for tomorrow, a group will meet at the Barrack's Road Woodland Project to work on invasives control and general clean-up.

On October 28<sup>th</sup>, JoAnn and Toine will supervise a group of UVA volunteers from the Forestry Club at Greenleaf Park to do control of invasive vines including English Ivy.

In November, in follow-up to the stump grinding at VDoF, CATS will be planting new trees to replace those taken out. The remainder of November is currently not scheduled, but will include many tree plantings – Steve Gaines has 500-600 trees to get into the ground with CATS's (and other's) assistance. (*Post-meeting editorial note: Steve has hired a private company to do this planting.*)

The projects committee is also looking to replace trees that failed to thrive at some of our established sites, including Darden Towe, Chris Greene Lake, and Mint Springs parks.

**Treasurer's Report:** JoAnn Dalley for Michelle Cormier

JoAnn highlighted the recent treasurer's report, noting that CATS has received several donations in the past month, that the credit card is paid off, and that income year-

to-date is approximately \$28,000 while costs have amounted to approximately \$15,000, leaving CATS safely solvent.

**Education Committee:** Barbara Monfort

Barbara reported that the 2023 training class is at its halfway point and going well. The committee will soon review each trainee's status to make sure they are staying current. They will have their pruning field session on Saturday, tree planting on November 4, and graduation on November 18.

Fall tree basics on selecting, planting, and caring for trees happens on November 2. November 14 and 16 are the dates for fall invasives ID and control methods.

There was a tree walk on September 30 which drew 25-30 attendees.

October 13, a successful tree walk was held in the Belmont neighborhood.

Upcoming events include the Fall tree ID walk on October 21, a twilight Halloween walk for PVCC students on October 26, and a walk at Darden Towe on October 27<sup>th</sup> and on October 28<sup>th</sup>. On December 3 and 9, there will be private tree walks at the Yancy property.

**Communications Committee:** JoAnn Dalley for Mary Spear

Mary was unable to attend. JoAnn reported for her that all notices have been posted; t-shirts have been ordered (thank you to survey respondents); and the CATS Facebook page has attracted looks even from other countries, though the audience is mainly local, in their 60s, and majority women.

**Tree Commission Report:** JoAnn Dalley for Jean Umiker-Sebeok

Jean was unable to attend, but JoAnn commented that Jean is very involved in the work of the Tree Commission and that members may always read Jean's reports by asking JoAnn to forward Jean's reports via email.

**Continuing and additional business:**

JoAnn reported that she and Kathy had a productive meeting with ReLeaf about the various roles each organization would assume going forward, including CATS's ongoing project at 10<sup>th</sup> and Page.

Susan McKinnon, Jean Umiker-Sebeok, and Kathy met with Tom Safranek of the C'ville Bicycle and Pedestrian Program. The meeting was to talk about which neighborhoods would benefit from a greater number of trees and how to make it work for people with accessibility concerns.

**Ending remarks:** JoAnn Dalley

JoAnn reminded the membership to continue entering their volunteer hours.

She urged everyone to take a look at the updated website, which is coming along nicely, and to visit the CATS Facebook page.

She reminded folks to contact Alison if they would like to purchase a CATS cap.

Finally, JoAnn encouraged the members to go see the CATS plantings, which are looking beautiful.

Respectfully submitted,

Alison Brill